

Murdered businessman cooperated with prosecutor

Guy S.B. Willets, a Grosse Pointe businessman who was fatally shot at point-blank range last week, was cooperating with Oakland County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson in a fraud investigation of a now-defunct Southfield trade promotion firm.

Patterson said Willets' company, the Oceanic Trade Alliance Council International, is being investigated for fraud after investors complained of being bilked out of as much as \$110,000 in a scheme to lease a cruise ship to promote American trade in the Middle East.

Willets' murder last Thursday in front of a popular Detroit restaurant near the Renaissance Center has hindered the fraud investigation, Patterson said. Willets was reportedly driven to the restaurant by Charles McClellan of Farmington to meet a third party. At the time of the shooting, police said, McClellan was inside the restaurant.

Both Patterson and Inspector Robert

Hilgop, chief of the Detroit homicide section, call Willets' murder an "assassination." Detroit Police said the 51-year-old promoter was shot twice in the head from a distance of about five inches.

Patterson said that 13 persons in Oakland County alone have reported losing money in the trade ship venture. "It was a trade ship that never

sailed," Patterson said. "We got involved in the investigation in November when we heard that representations were made to investors that the ship was leased and ready to go. Apparently preliminary contact was made with a shipping company but there was no guarantee, no ship waiting.

The state securities and exchange department enforcement division be-

gan the initial inquiry into the trade council, according to Patterson.

Willets was sitting in a car outside the restaurant when he was fatally shot. He was in a leg cast at the time because 11 days before, police said, Willets broke his leg in a scuffle with a gunman.

Detroit and Oakland County officials are investigating the beneficiaries of a

\$2.5 million insurance policy on Willets' life. The Detroit Free Press identified three officials of a Southfield investment firm—Richard D. French, John F. Kiley, and Mat Alfeir—as "principal business associates" of Willets in the Oceanic Trade Alliance Council.

The three men could not be reached for comment. Their offices are in the Prudential Tower Center.



Equus' premieres

Howard Egan of Farmington Hills rehearses a scene from the upcoming Livonia-Redford Theatre Guild production of "Equus." Egan plays the psychiatrist, Martin Dysart. Pictured with him is Kenneth Ward of Flint as Alan Strang. "Equus" is the story of a disturbed youth who has blinded six horses and a psychiatrist who, during treatment, comes to envy the boy's capacity for worship and passion. Performances are at 8:30 p.m. Feb. 16, 17, 23, 24 and 25 at 15138 Beech Daily. Admission is \$3.50. Call 422-4766 for information.

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